

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7001

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTS TO P.M. BHUTTO'S
QUETTA SPEECH

1. IN TWO PARAGRAPH ITEM APPEARING AS LEAD ARTICLE
IN APRIL 6 EDITION "KABUL TIMES", AFGHAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) HAS RESPONDED TO PAKISTANI
P. M. BHUTTO'S REMARKS ON PAK/AFGHAN RELATIONS DE-
LIVERED TO PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (PPP) CONFERENCE
IN QUETTA APRIL 3. MFA SPOKESMAN STATED BHUTTO'S
STATEMENTS WERE REPLY TO "PREARRANGED QUESTION," AND
WERE "LUDICROUS AND FALSE" IN RELATION TO AFGHANISTAN
AND HISTORY OF REGION. BHUTTO'S REMARKS, WHICH STATE-
MENT ASSERTS HAVE BEEN MADE PREVIOUSLY ON DIFFERENT
OCCASIONS, ARE ATTRIBUTED TO P.M.'S "STATE OF NERVOUS
EXCITEMENT DUE TO CONFUSION AND DISARRAY OF CONDITIONS
INSIDE PAKISTAN" AND PRESSURE OF PUBLIC OPINION.
REJECTING BHUTTO'S VERSION OF REGIONAL HISTORY,
DENIGRATING AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT,
SPOKESMAN NOTED STRUGGLES OF AFGHAN PEOPLE IN
PROTECTING AND PRESERVING INDEPENDENCE AND TER-
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RITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFGHANISTAN.

2. STATEMENT THEN GOES ON TO WELCOME BHUTTO'S REMARKS THAT PAKISTAN IS READY FOR TALKS WITH AFGHANISTAN, AND REFERS TO PRESIDENT DAOUD'S RESPONSE TO REUTER CORRESPONDEND (KABUL 2294) IN WHICH HE STATED HE SAW NO OBSTACKES TO A BHUTTO VISIT TO KABUL. STATEMENT ENDS WITH MFA SPOKESMAN'S REAFFIRMATION OF DAOUD'S STATEMENT "THAT WHENEVER MR. BHUTTO WISHES TO VISIT AFGHANISTAN FOR TALKS AND FRIENDLY SOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, THERE IS NO OBSTACLE".

3. VERNACULAR DAILY "ANIS" ALSO CARRIES UNATTRIBUTED (HENCE "UNOFFICIAL") ITEM ON BHUTTO'S SPEECH. WHILE TONE OF ARTICLE NOT NOTICEABLY HARSHER THAN MFA YAATEMENT, ARTICLE MORE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSES BHUTTO'S ASSERTIONS AND RENDITION OF REGIONAL HISTORY. (I.E., HOW CAN MR. BHUTTO NOW SAY WHAT

AFGHANISTAN GAINED REAL INDEPENDENCE ONLY WHEN PAKISTAN BECAME INDEPENDENT, WHEN PREVIOUSLY HE STATED THAT AFGHANISTAN WAS INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN WHEN IT AGREED TO DURAND LINE?) DAOUD STATEMENT THAT THERE ARE NO OBSTACLES TO BHUTTO VISIT DOES NOT APPEAR IN THIS COMMENTARY.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN THE TREATMENT OF P.M. BHUTTO'S SPEECH WE HAVE SEEN IN APRIL 4 "PAKISTAN TIMES" AND FBIS VERSION OF KARACHI DOMESTIC SERVICE ENGLISH BROADCAST OF 1700 GMT 3 APRIL, AFGHAN RESPONSE IS MILD. BHUTTO'S RENDERING OF AFGHAN HISTORY STRIKES AT THE ROOTS OF AFGHAN PRIDE AND HONOR. SEEN IN THIS LIGHT, QUESTIONING OF BHUTTO'S MENTAL STABILITY APPEARS TO US AS FAIRLY LOW ON SCALE OF POSSIBLE AFGHAN PUGNACIOUSNESS. COMMENT THAT BHUTTO HAS MADE SUCH REMARKS PREVIOUSLY, APPEARS TO BE ATTEMPT OF GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN (GOA) TO MINIMIZE INSULT OFFERED. REITERATION OF DAOUD'S WILLINGNESS FOR BHUTTO TO COME TO KABUL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR TALKS IS CLEAR SIGNAL, AT THE LEAST, THAT GOA DOES NOT WANT FURTHER DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS WITH ISLAMABAD AND, AT MOST, THAT KABUL SERIOUSLY WISHES BETTERMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. ELIOT

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